1: Gifford E-4,5 (1920-1921) 1929 OU9 Tonga OU9

PRIESTS AND POSSESSION

Tongan priests and priestesses suggest Turkic shamans, inasmuch as they become inspired by the gods, by lesser spirits, and by the spirits of the ancestors of chiefs or of recently deceased chiefs. The resemblance to the shamans applies particularly to those Tongan priests who became inspired by the spirits of deceased human beings, who, it was believed, came from Pulotu to convey to the living certain messages. The resemblance becomes even clearer when it is recalled that the Tongans apparently regard the spirits of chiefs and gods as being essentially alike. In fact, at the present time both gods and ghosts are called *tevolo*. The term *ulusino* refers to possession by a god or spirit. Baker defines *ulusino* as "to be possessed by evil spirits; to dwell in the body; to be one with man, applied to the gods."

If the spirit that manifested itself in a priest or priestess was of human origin, it was invariably that of a great chief, such as the Tui Tonga, rather than the spirit of a person of inferior rank. It is said that those mediums who became animated by the spirits of dead Tui Tonga had no special house of worship. They would seem not to have been regular priests who were already dedicated to the service of some god, but rather individuals who suddenly became inspired by the spirit of the deceased. Mariner (40) gives examples.

Tongan priests and priestesses further resemble shamans at least superficially, in their supposed ability to cure illness, not, of course, through their own unaided efforts but through their intercession with the gods. The sick and infirm were brought to the houses of these priests when the gods were besought to cure them. Sacrifices were offered and oracles obtained through the priest who became inspired by the god, the oracle usually foretelling the course and result of the illness.

Priesthood appears normally to have remained in particular families, and it appears that either men or women might become inspired. Priests are known by the terms *taula otua, taula eiki, taula tevolo* (devil), *toumama, faahikehe,* and apparently *feaa.* The word *toumama* means in general "the people or worshippers of any given god." The term *feaa* given by Farmer (23, p. 128) may be but an abbreviated form of *faahikehe,* a term also meaning god, spirit, ghost. Presumably *faahikehe* was applied only to a possessed priest.

Apparently it is permissible to regard the Tongan deities as somewhat in the nature of a North American shaman's familiar, except, of course, that the American shaman's familiar or guardian spirit does not actually enter him and speak through him. In Tonga it was impossible to obtain information about guardian spirits other than family gods.

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sees many things in a muddled dream they do not come true. The period that elapses between a dream and its fulfilment is variable—it may be a week or it may be several months.

A sickness called *fafanga*, which is manifested by a "bad stomach" and results in "doubling up" or even death, is caused by dreaming that a man comes and feeds the dreamer pork, fowl, and other rich food.

A sickness called *takini*, painful urination, is believed to be caused by the frequent dreaming of sexual intercourse. The belief is that the visitant of the dreamer is a spirit (*tevolo*).

MAGIC

Most of the extant magical practices are to be found in the formulas of the *faitoo* (doctors). Material presented here includes odds and ends of magical practices not largely concerned with curing. Malevolent magic is still practiced. Spoken words were believed to be effective too. Thus the term *talatukii* means to curse, to use imprecations so deadly and horrible, that the person against whom they were directed usually died from the effect.

Any medicine man or woman was called *faitoo*. The house of a *faitoo* was called *falehangatamaki*. One informant said that this house was only that of a *faitoo* who treated boils and skin eruptions, and this statement is probably correct, as *hangatamaki* means any sickness or disease appearing upon the surface of the body. When confronted with a sickness about whose diagnosis he was in doubt, a *faitoo* passed his hands over the diseased part, repeating a formula which named every possible disease known and directed the medicine to cure any one or all of them. (See p. 343.)

When collecting the bark of the *tavo* and *siole* (*Gardenia*) for medicine the collector always observes which part is towards the setting sun and collects the bark from that side. It is believed to be particularly efficacious, though no reason was given.

One informant stated that his father had buried his umbilical cord and planted a coconut over it. As the tree flourished, so would the individual. I could get no corroboration of this as a practice. No other account of tree planting was obtained. Possibly fear that the tree might be killed and the person suffer make people reticent.

The story of the turtle Sangone mentions the magical stopping of growth and retention of childhood by striking a child on the top of the head (26, p. 50).

When a child's milk tooth is extracted it is thrown on the roof of a house, so that the second tooth will grow quickly. At the same time this rhyme is said:

Hinehina matailaila	White with spots
Omai hoo nifo kovi mooku	Give me your bad tooth
Kae o atu hoo nifo lelei moou.	But have a good tooth for yourself.

That there is a ceremonial or lucky number in Tonga I did not definitely ascertain. That there was, or is, such a number seems likely and it may

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breaker. An example of such a tapu is the placing of a shark, or other fish, emblem upon a tree in a plantation, with the penalty that the tapu breaker will be devoured by a shark or other savage fish, the representative of a god such as Taufaitahi. I noted these tapu signs, as well as those used by medical practitioners in both Eua and Nomuka islands. 784

The tapus placed by medical practitioners consist of leaf or coconut fiber (*kaka*) bundles containing pulverized leaves, which are attached to trees or hung on sticks or fences. (I saw one on a barbed wire fence.) To defy this tapu is to become afflicted with boils or some other ailment. The tapu tree is called *taungatapu* (tapu roost), and this practice by which thieves are said to be accursed is called *tuki*. The following note by Mr. W. H. Murley refers to this practice of *tuki*: 784 753

> All Tongans are more or less doctors (of a sort), but every family has a specific for some particular disease—there is no general doctor amongst them. For instance, one family will have the gift of curing wounds or stopping bleeding merely by touch. Others again are specialists in strains and so on. But nearly every disease that they cannot describe as either a break, strain, wound, or cramps comes under the general heading of *hangatamaki*. The nearest translations are "boil and ulcer," but the term is applied to both internal and external complaints. For example, rheumatism and ordinary boils on the skin are both classed as *hangatamaki*. Each particular kind has its separate doctor and although another person might use the same specifics the effect will not be produced. All this preamble is necessary to explain the tapu. If a farmer is tired of having the coconuts stolen off his plantation and is desirous of having them tapu, he will go to a man who has the reputation of curing a certain *hangatamaki*, say styes on the eyes, and beg him to go along to his plantation (*api*) and tapu the coconuts. With this end in view the doctor will make up a few packages containing odds and ends and hang them in conspicuous positions on various coconut trees. From that time on the plantation is tapu and should anyone, even the owner, take coconuts away, or even touch one he will be afflicted with that particular *hangatamaki* and will have to go to the one who put on the tapu in order to get cured. When the sufferer is cured he will bring along a substantial present to the doctor in payment for services. The tapu is only taken off at the wish of the owner, who, accompanied by the one who put it on, goes and takes down the packages from the various trees. 756 759 753 756 759 784 756 753 685

The term *sausau* was given by one informant as another word that applies both to the concrete object attached to the tree or other property and to the curse or malediction accompanying it and falling upon the tapu breaker, who becomes subject to the curse of the one who put up the tapu badge. By another informant *sausau* was listed as one of several tapus and "sickness." The others are *tapuofe* (to bend under a load), *mahangalei* (twins, one of each sex), *kahipapalangi* (*kahi*, goiter; *papalangi*, European), *hulupa*, and *kahitoto*. 784 753 685 [164]

According to Methodist informants, a Free Church minister in Falelua, Foa Island, Haapai, at the time of my visit was engaged in the lucrative side line of tapuing coconut trees against rats, banana patches against horses, and yam plantations against pigs. White calico consecrated by contact with the Bible was the tapu emblem employed. The reputation for efficacy 784 [178]

22: West M-3 (1846-1855) 1865 OU9 Tonga OU9

selves of medical Missionary skill: while, at the same time, they have confessed to the general efficacy of the treatment received, by the entire abandonment of many of the quackeries of their own professional doctors.

These Tonguese doctors, or *kau faitoo*, were a distinct class who confined the knowledge of their art to their own families, and thus made the employment, which was lucrative, hereditary. The practice they followed was a combination of sorcery, and superstitious ceremony, with the administration of herbal medicines, or the external application of medicated oils, or pounded leaves. Unquestionably, their knowledge of the medicinal properties of herbs was considerable; but, not unfrequently, fatal results ensued from their prescriptions. Sometimes, in heathen days, these occurred by design, and at all times their administration might be accompanied by serious accident. For the sake of securing greater secrecy, the herbs are often gathered during the darkness of night. Hence cases have been known, in which a deadly poison has thus become mixed with the intended medicine, and the patient has been destroyed. For the relief of local pain, the natives are great believers in the soothing and curative powers of proper external manipulation and friction, as well as in a liberal depletion, by small gashes, made over the afflicted part, after the style of "cupping." In rheumatic affections, and pains of a kindred nature, the natives employ medicated embrocations, which, I believe, are similar to those mentioned by Dr. Seemann as in use among the Fijians.*

In setting limbs, a few of the Tonguese doctors

* "Viti," by Dr. Seemann, p. 340.

75: Beaglehole E-5 (1938-1939) 1940 OU9 Tonga OU9
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Pangai

she curses all her enemies and freely predicts for them all the major and minor horrors of a Wesleyan hell. She struggles hard and excitedly to free herself from restraining hands that she may make herself the instrument of God's vengeance here and now. The ravings and the strugglings go on incessantly. One cannot doubt, as one listens, that Christianity in its Wesleyan variety has laid the deepest and most indelible impress on the woman's mind, giving shape and form to all her worries and to all her blind striving to set her mind once more at ease. All this proves that religion is the mortar that holds together at least one Tongan woman's mind and, to vary the metaphor, provides the form in which the sick mind sets when it tries to cure itself by going insane.

Dr. Lopdell continued to treat this patient for some days. Then her relatives decided that native medicine might be more efficacious. They therefore called in a Tongan expert who diagnosed the case as one of possession by an evil spirit. The woman was thereafter dosed and manipulated and whipped in an effort to attract or drive the spirit from her body. At latest report she is surviving this treatment and apparently making a slow recovery. Her recovery, however, is never likely to be permanent.

I have brief notes from Dr. Lopdell of another manic patient, a mixed-blood girl of about twenty, the onset of whose psychosis was apparently due to thwarting in love combined with a hypersensitiveness and who felt inferiority regarding her social status among the small European community in Neiafu. Her two brothers had also displayed psychotic tendencies. As with the patient mentioned above, the girl's symptoms patterned themselves in terms of religious symbols.

Dr. Lopdell mentioned four or five other cases of Tongan insanity in which religion had played a similar role. And those who know Tongan life today realize full well that Wesleyan Christianity has come to full seeding in the life and behavior of the modern—and normal—Tongan. Churchgoing occupies a large part of his time: four times each Sunday and three times each week as a matter of normal routine; a week of churchgoing twice each day, to celebrate each new year; miscellaneous services and prayer meetings seemingly thrown in on the slightest excuse. Behind are laws of the state that not only establish a church, but implement its morality with secular authority, and a short 19th-century church history which includes among other minor events a major record of religious persecutions, exilings, and organized religious warfare—Wesleyans against heathens, Wesleyans against Roman Catholics, Wesleyans against Wesleyan schisms and Wesleyan defections. The record is not a pretty one, but if the events have done nothing else, they have at least burned Wesleyan Christianity into the hearts and minds of these Tongan people; burned it deeply, painfully, but indelibly.

Tongan life today, therefore, has been born from the mating of John Wesley's teaching with the customs of a pagan people. The birth was clumsily caesarian. Plenty of blood was spilled and a good deal of tissue that got in the way was roughly extirpated. The now adult child, however, is seemingly strong and prosperous.

Summary

The case material here presented suggests the value of a study of psychic stress in a primitive community, specifically in a present-day Tongan village. It enables us not only to revalue the predominant cultural norms in such a community, but also to trace out the lines of stress which result from the impact of such norms upon the personalities of individual members of the society. Such study is important in an aboriginal culture relatively untouched